

TOP MONTRÉAL DESIGNERS OPEN THEIR DOORS TO YOUNGSTERS

Montréal, March 31, 2009—Montréal was designated a **UNESCO City of Design** in 2006 because of the strong concentration of talented designers in the city. What better way to help members of the public understand the true meaning of this honour and bring it to life than to invite them to visit these creative professionals!

To stimulate and inspire children's creativity, the Design Montréal office of the Ville de Montréal, together with the UNESCO Chair in Landscape and Environmental Design at Université de Montréal, are partnering with the Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine, the Ministère des Affaires municipales, des Régions et de l'Occupation du territoire and the Conférence régionale des élus de Montréal to launch the Youth Design project as part of the 2009 Design Montréal Open House, taking place this May 2 and 3.

The Open House is a one-of-a-kind opportunity to get to know the men and women who dedicate their talents and creativity to enhancing Montrealers' living environment. During these two days, members of the public will be able to meet design professionals whose projects have been recognized in national and international competitions and contests in architecture, landscape architecture, interior design, industrial design, graphic design, fashion design and urban design. They will be present in their places of work to proudly show off their most recent achievements, making sure to warmly welcome visitors and pulling out all the stops to satisfy the most curious among them. From giant-screen projections to 3D models, group activities, guided tours and interactive tools, they will spare no effort to provide adults and children alike with a better understanding of their craft.

Youth Design, a variety of enriching, fun and interactive activities

Few young people realize the way design contributes to and has an impact on their lives, and for the most part they remain unaware of the creation and marketing processes behind so many of their favourite consumer products (clothing, sports equipment, electronic devices and video games). The fact that their interest in the architecture and urban landscapes around them is dormant is all the more reason to wake it up! With this in mind, almost 20 of the approximately 60 professional offices and places of interest included in the 2009 Design Montréal Open House program have planned a special welcome just for young people, offering a variety of enriching activities presented in fun, interactive ways.

To get the most out of this pilot project, 1,000 children aged 10 to 12 and enrolled in Cycle 3 (grades 5-6) studies at elementary schools in neighbourhoods near Open House venues will receive personalized invitations to take part in the event accompanied by their parents and teachers. Each child will receive a special "passport" from the organizers. Passports will also be available in download form at www.designmontreal.com for any other children who wish to acquire one.

How to use the passport and enter the “Great Youth Design Experience” contest

The passport lists all the 2009 Design Montréal Open House venues offering activities designed especially for young people. For the passport to be useful and to allow children to enter both parts (mail and online) of the “Great Youth Design Experience” contest, each participant must visit at least one Open House venue, accompanied by a parent or teacher, and have someone there stamp the tear-off contest entry coupon at the back of the passport. Children can then double their odds of winning simply by going to the Youth Design page at www.designmontreal.com and answering a few questions about the activity they took part in, and suggesting an original name for a designer tool that is currently being prototyped. The child whose suggestion is chosen will receive the prototype of this useful tool from industrial designer **Claude Mauffette**, and enjoy an opportunity to learn the basics of creating and manufacturing designer objects during a hands-on workshop with Mr. Mauffette. Lastly, a name will be drawn from all stamped entry coupons received by mail, and the winning student will be invited to a similar workshop with pioneering Québec fashion designer **Marie Saint Pierre**, who will help the child design and make a one-of-a-kind clothing item.

Youth Design is an initiative of the **Design Montréal** office of the Ville de Montréal and the **UNESCO Chair in Landscape and Environmental Design at Université de Montréal**, being conducted in partnership with the Ministère de la **Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine**, the Ministère des **Affaires municipales, des Régions et de l’Occupation du territoire** and the **Conférence régionale des élus de Montréal**. In addition, three elementary schools are collaborating closely with the Youth Design pilot project, and will each be providing the organizers with a commented, constructive summary report on their students’ and teachers’ experience during the May 2-3 Open House. They are **Nouvelles-Querbes** (Outremont), **L’étoile filante** (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce) and **Saint-Étienne** (Rosemont).

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